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Who Was Our Sieur de Vincennes?

JACOB P. DUNN, Controller of Indianapolis

Most of the puzzles in Indiana history have been very satisfactorily solved, but there remains one that has baffled the most diligent students of the United States and Canada—Who was the Sieur de Vincennes who established our ancient post on the Wabash? In the seventeenth century, the kings of France established an inferior order of nobility in Canada, and among the seigneuries or fiefs then established was that of Vincennes, which was granted to Francois Bissot, in 1672. This estate is situated on the south side of the St. Lawrence river below Quebec, opposite the eastern end of the Isle of Orleans.

In propriety nobody could be called Sieur de Vincennes except a holder of this fief, for there was no other estate of this name in Canada or France. After the death of Francois Bissot, his son Jean Baptiste Bissot succeeded to the title. That he was still Sieur de Vincennes on July 9, 1717, has been conclusively demonstrated by Mr. Edmond Mallet, of Washington, the author of the most extensive research on this subject. (Ind. Hist. Soc. Pubs., Vol. 3, No. 2.) It is therefore practically certain that he was the man of whom De Vaudreuil wrote, on Oct. 28, 1719: "I learn from the last letters that have arrived from the Miamis, that Sieur de Vincennes having died in their village, these Indians had resolved not to move to the River St. Joseph." (N. Y. Col. Docs. Vol. 9, p. 894.) That this village was Kikakon (later corrupted to Ke-ki-un-gi—site of Ft. Wayne) is established by the fact that in 1749, Captain Celeron appealed to La Demoiselle's Miamis, who had deserted the French for the English, to return to Kikakon, "the place where repose the bones of your fathers, and those of Sieur de Vincennes, whom you loved so well, and who always governed you so that everything was well." (Margry, Vol. 6, p. 718.)

No record has been found in Canada of any succession to the fief of Vincennes after 1719, until 1749, when it passed to Joseph

Roy, by judicial decree. (*Acte de Foy et Homage*, Vol. 4, p. 348.) But from at least as early as 1722 to 1736, when he was killed in battle with the Chickasaws, there was a man in the French service universally known, in all official and other correspondence, as Sieur de Vincennes, and this man was the founder of our Indiana post. The local clues to his identity were practically exhausted by Judge John Law in his history of Vincennes in the following passages:

Francois Morgan de Vinsenne ("Vinsenne," for so he spelled his name) was an officer in the service of the King of France, and served in Canada probably as early as 1720, in the regiment "de Carignan." At any rate, as we are informed, he was engaged in some service with another officer on the lakes towards Sault St. Marie, for the Governor of Canada, M. de Vaudreuil, in 1725. At what time he took possession here is not exactly known, probably somewhere about the year 1732. There is nothing on our records to show, but an act of sale made by him and Madame Vinsenne, the daughter of Monsieur Philip Longprie of Kaskaskia, and recorded there. The act of sale, dated 5th January, 1735, styles him "an officer of the troops of the King," and "commandant au poste du Oua-bache;" the same deed expressing that Madame Vinsenne was absent at the Post. Her signature being necessary to the deed, she sent her mark, or cross, which is testified to as hers, "X the mark of Madame Vinsenne," and showing that the good lady was not very far advanced in the rudiments, though her husband was commandant, and her father the wealthiest citizen of Kaskaskia. The will of Monsieur Longprie, his father-in-law, dated the 10th of March, 1735, gives to him, among other things, 408 lbs. of pork, which he wishes "kept safe until the arrival of Mons. Vinsenne," who was then at the Post. There are other documents there signed by him as a witness, in 1733-4; among them one of a receipt for 100 pistoles, received from his father-in-law, on his marriage. From all these proofs, I think it evident that he was here previous to 1733, and left with his command, on an expedition against the Chickasaws, in 1736, by orders from his superior officer at New Orleans. On looking at the register of the Catholic church, it will be found that the change of name from Vinsenne to Vincennes, its present appellation, was made as early as 1749. Why or wherefore I do not know. I wish the original orthography had been observed, and the name spelled after its founder, with the "s" instead of the "c," as it should be.

A few weeks ago, in view of the centennial interest in Indiana history, I wrote to Mr. Arthur Doughty, Dominion Archivist, at Ottawa, and inquired whether recent research had unearthed anything farther as to the identity of our Sieur de Vincennes. He courteously forwarded to me the following document, under date of January 17, 1916:

MEMORANDA CONCERNING THE SIEUR DE VINCENNES IN ANSWER TO MR. J. P. DUNN'S LETTER OF THE 4th DECEMBER, 1915

1. Lettre du Conseil de Marine à Messrs. Beauharnois et Dupuy du 14 Mai 1726: "Les 6 Enseignes en second ont été accordées aux Srs. Desgly, Lorimier, de Vincennes, Mouchy, d'Hocquincourt, Delage et Malespine."—Série B, Vol. 42, partie 2, p. 376). Registres Poste de Vincennes, 1749-1786.

2. Copie d'une lettre écrite par M. de Vaudreuil à M. de Boisbrillant de Montreal le 17 Aout, 1724: "Je suis bien aise de l'avancement des Srs. Sr. de Vincennes de mon gouvernement et que vous ayés entrepris de lui faire quitter un poste où il est très nécessaire par le crédit qu'il a chés les nations sauvages de ce poste que vous scavés ne dependre en aucune façon du gouvernement du Mississipy. Je serois très fasché destre obligé d'en porter mes plaintes à la cour, ce que je feray cependant si on continue à l'en detacher. Je me flatte Monsieur que vous y ferés attention et que vous reflechirés sur les inconvenances qui en pourroient arriver. J'ai ecript l'année dernière pour l'avancement du Sr. de Vincennes. J'espère que la Cour aura fait attention à mes representations et qu'il aura de l'employ cette année."—(Série F, Vol. 56, p. 147.)

3. Messrs. Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre, 15 Oct. 1730: "Les Vinatanous (Ouiatanons) ont été emmenés dans le Gouvernement de la Louisiane par le Sr. de Vincennes."—(Séries F, Vol. 52, p. 27.)

4. Liste des Officiers qui servent dans les Compagnies en Canada, avec l'extrait des troupes qui les composent, 1729: "Enseigne en second Vincennes. Fait à Quebec le 15 Oct. 1729. Silly."—(Série F, Vol. 51, p. 237 bis).

5. Messrs de Beauharnois et Hocquart, 12 Oct. 1732: "Le Sr. de Vincennes qui est aux Ousatanous a été informé des dernières conditions faites pour le transport des boeufs illinois au Canada et a écrit à Mr. de Beauharnois que si Sa Majesté lui accordoit la mesme gratification qu'au Sr. Gatineau, c'est-a-dire 1000 livres, il parviendroit à en envoyer de vivants en Canada; comme elles ne sont que conditionnelles nous lui avons repondu qu'il serait traité comme l'auroit été le Sr. Gatineau."—(Série F, Vol. 57, p. 73.)

6. Mémoire sur les Sauvages du Canada: "Au surplus Mrs. de Beauharnois et Hocquart agiront de concert autant que l'éloignement le peut permettre avec Mr. Perier et Salmon sur tout ce qui pourra procurer l'avantage des colonies. Ils ont déjà commencé à se mettre en relation avec eux et M. de Beauharnois a écrit en conséquence au Sr. de Vincennes qui commande aux Ouitanons et lui à recommandé de donner toute son attention pour rompre les mesures que les Anglois pourroient prendre pour empêcher le commerce entre les deux colonies et de disposer ces Sauvages à seconder M. Périer, &c."—(Série F, Vol. 58, p. 129).

7. *Alphabet Laffillard*, Vol. II, p. 319: "VINCENNES—Enseigne en second Canada 23 Avril 1726: Lt. reformé Canada 1 Avril 1733."

"VINCENNES—Enseigne reformé Louisiane 20 Mai 1722; Lieut. reformé Louisiane 19 Xbre 1722; Confirmé Louisiane 4 Avril 1730; Commandant aux Ouabaches; Tué aux Ouabaches 25 Mars 1736; Remplacé aux Ouabaches 15 8bre 1736."

8. Description et Historique de la Louisiane, 1680-1755, Moreau St. Mery. (Série B³, Vol. 24, p. 452) : "1739. Relation que fait le Sr. Drouet de Richarville de l'engagement que M. D'Artaguette eut avec les Chicachas au mois de Mars 1736, par la voie du fort St. Frederic. Il rapporte qu'en cette circonstance trois de ces frères furent tués, que lui-même reçut 2 coups de feu, au bras gauche et au bas ventre, et un coup de flèche au poignet, qu'il fut pris les armes à la main par 3 Chicachas et amené au village avec 22 Français dont 20 ont été brûlés, entr'autres: le Père Sénat, Jésuite, M. M. Dartagouette, de Vincennes, de Coulanges, de St. Ange fils, Du Tisné, D'Esgly, de Tonty le Cadet. Ces messieurs furent brûlés avec le Père Sénat le jour même de l'action depuis 3 heures de l'après-midi jusqu'à minuit. Les autres Français brûlés étaient des Officiers et militaires. Le Sr. de Courses ou Coustillas, officier, brûlé 3 jours après, au grand village avec un iroquois du Sault St. Louis; le Sr. de Courses avait été nommé à la garde des poudres avec 35 hommes, s'étant égaré il se rendit au village des Chicachas sans savoir où il allait. N'a pu savoir ce que sont devenus les 35 Français qui étaient avec lui. Fut conduit dans la cabane du chef du village de Joutalla où il a été gardé à vue pendant 6 mois par les jeunes gens, après quoi il a vécu en pleine liberté et a chassé avec les Chicachas."

Translation of Above

1. Letter of the Council of Marine to Messrs. Beauharnois and Dupuy, May 14, 1726: "The six positions of Enseigne en second have been accorded to Sieurs Desgly, Lorimier, de Vincennes, Mouchy, d'Hocquincourt, Delage and Malespine."

2. Copy of a letter written by M. de Vaudreuil to M. de Boisbriant, of Montreal, Aug. 17, 1724: "I am well pleased at the advancement of the Srs. St. Ange, father and son, but I am surprised that you should think of detaching Sieur de Vincennes from my jurisdiction, and that you have agreed to have him quit a post when he is most necessary on account of the credit he has with the Indians of this post, which, as you know, does not depend in any way on the government of Mississippi. I should be very sorry to carry my complaints to the court, which I shall do, nevertheless, if he is detached. I flatter myself, Monsieur, that you will give heed, and that you will reflect on the inconvenience which might arise. I wrote last year for the advancement of Sieur de Vincennes. I hope that the Court has given attention to my representations and that he will have the position this year."

3. [Report of] Messrs. Beauharnois and Hocquart to the Minister, October 15, 1730: "The Ouiatanons have been led away into the jurisdiction of Louisiana by Sieur de Vincennes."

4. List of the officers who serve in the companies in Canada, with

an abstract of the troops that compose them, 1729: "Second Ensign, Vincennes. Made at Quebec, Oct. 15, 1729."

5. [Report of] Messrs. Beauharnois and Hocquart, Oct. 12, 1733: "Sieur de Vincennes, who is at the Ouiatanons, has been informed of the last conditions made for the transport of Illinois cattle to Canada, and has written to M. Beauharnois that if His Majesty will accord him the same allowance as to Sieur Gatineau, that is to say 1,000 livres, he will succeed in sending live cattle to Canada; as it is only conditional we have replied to him that he will be treated as Sieur Gatineau was."

6. Memoir on the Indians of Canada: "In addition, Messrs. Beauharnois and Hocquart will act in concert, so far as their separation permits, with Messrs. Perier and Salmon on all that can promote the advantage of the colonies. They have already commenced to put themselves in relation with them, and in consequence M. Beauharnois has written to Sieur de Vincennes who commands at the Ouiatanons, and has recommended him to give all his attention to foil the measures which the English may be able to take to impede the commerce between the two colonies, and to direct his Indians to second M. Perier."

7. *Alphabet Laffilard*, Vol. II. p. 319: "VINCENNES—Second Ensign, Canada, April 23, 1726; Half-pay Lieutenant. Canada, April 1, 1833."

"VINCENNES—Half-pay Ensign, Louisiana, May 20, 1722; half-pay Lieutenant, Louisiana, Dec. 19, 1877; Confirmed, Louisiana, April 4, 1730; Commandant at Ouabaches, (i. e. Wabash Indians); killed March 25, 1736; replaced October 15, 1736."

8. *Description and History of Louisiana, 1680-1755*, Moreau St. Mery: "1739. Relation made by Sieur Drouet de Richardville of the engagement which M. de Artaguette had with the Chickasaws in the month of March, 1736, on the way to Fort St. Frederic. He reports that in this engagement three of his brothers were killed; that he himself received two gunshot wounds, one in the left arm and one at the base of the stomach, and an arrow wound in his wrist; that he was taken arms in hand by three Chickasaws and brought to a village with 22 French, of whom 20 were burned at the stake, among others: Father Senat, Jesuit; Messrs. d'Artaguette, de Vincennes, de Coulanges, de St. Ange fils, Du Tisne, d'Esgly, de Tonty the younger. These gentlemen were burned with Father Senat on the day of the fight, from 3 o'clock in the afternoon to midnight. The other officers who were burned were officers and militiamen. Sieur Courseslas, or Coustillas, officer, was burned three days later at the large village, with an Iroquois from the Sault St. Louis; Sieur Courseslas had been detailed with 35 men to guard the ammunition. Being misled he came to the village of the Chickasaws without knowing where he was going. He was not able to learn what became of the 35 Frenchmen who were with Courseslas. He was conducted to the cabin of the chief of the village of Joutalla, where he was guarded for six months by the young men, after which he was given full liberty, and hunted with the Chickasaws."

It seems certain to me that the two extracts from the *Alphabet Laffilard*, title "Vincennes," refer to the same man. The

second one unquestionably refers to the founder of our post; but it is equally certain that he was an officer in both Canada and Louisiana at the same time. This is evident from several documents, but perhaps the letter of the Louisiana Company to Perier, of September 30, 1726, is most explicit. I quote: "The Company has ordered the establishment of a post on the river Ouabache, and has requested M. the Governor of Canada, on his part, to direct Sieur de Vincennes, who commands at the home of the Ouyatanons-Miamis, established towards the head of the Ouabache, to come to an understanding with the commandant of the new post to bring this nation nearer. M. de Boisbriant writes that he thinks it necessary to give command of it to M. de Vincennes, who is already a half-pay lieutenant of the Louisiana infantry, and who can do more with the Miamis than anyone else. To induce Sieur de Vincennes to attach himself to the colony of Louisiana, M. Perier will advise him that he has obtained for him from the company an annuity of three hundred livres, which will be paid to him with his salary as half-pay lieutenant." (Margry, Vol. 6, pp. 659-60.)

It strikes me that there is an important lead in the statement of the Abbe Tanguay to Mr. Mallet: "I would observe, however, that it is not Francois married to Angelique Guyon—but Pierre Francois Margane, Sieur des Forests." (*Ind. Hist. Soc. Pubs.*, Vol. 3, p. 53.) I have not been able to find any trace of this Pierre Francois Margane in Tanguay's *Genealogical Dictionary*. There cannot be any question of Judge Law's statement that our Commandant wrote his name "Francois Morgan de Vinsenne." Law had no opportunity to get the name except from an actual signature.

Mr. Doughty also included with this an interesting study of the problem by M. Phileas Gagnan, of which the following is a translation:

JEAN BISSOT DE VINCENNES

The following are a few notes supplementary to those already published by our friend Edmond Mallet, of Washington, on the Canadian voyageur and explorer, who has, it is said, given his name to the capital of Indiana:

1668—The twenty-first of the month of January sixteen hundred and sixty-eight, has been baptised by me, Henry de Bernières, curé of this parish, Jean Baptiste Byssot, son of François Byssot and of Marie Couillard, his wife, born the nineteenth of the same month and year. The godfather was M. Jean Talon, Intendant for the king of this country, and the godmother Guillemette-Marie Hébert, wife of the late Guillaume Couillard, of this parish.—H. DE BERNIERES.

1687—The 20th of October, 1687, Jean Bissot de Vincennes, son of the deceased Francois Bissot and of Marie Couillard, presents his request to the Sovereign Council, representing that having reached the age of twenty years, or thereabout, and being on the point of going to France for an employment, there should be accorded to him letters of privilege of maturity, which will aid him in the management of his estate.—*Judgments and Deliberations*, Vol. III, p. 189.

1694—The 25th of October, 1694 (Record Office of Chambalon), Jean Bissot, Sieur de Vincennes, living at Quebec, sells to Louis Marchand, also of Quebec, all the rights which he may have or claim in the Seigneurie of Mingan, and the unincumbered half of an estate in the Seigneurie of Lauzon, adjoining Beaumont, for the sum of 2,500 livres. This land has been granted to him, jointly with his brother Charles, by his godfather, the Intendant Talon. He signed at that time as follows:

1709—The 10th of July, 1709 (Record Office of Le Pallieur), Jean Baptiste Bissot, Sieur de Vincennes, living at Quebec, is at Montreal, and sells for a second time his portion of the seigneurie of Mingan, to Francois Brissonet, merchant wig-maker of Montreal.

1736—Extracts from a letter of Toussaint Loizel, found in the Record Office of Compart, notary at Montreal:

“LA PERTUITE,

“MY DEAR BROTHER: I cannot neglect before closing to set down a word to you on the subject of the war which has been made on the Chickasaws, in which we have lost forty Frenchmen. M. D'Artaguette, commandant of the said post, has been killed with seven officers of the troops, four of militia, all men of family (who) had part in this unfortunate action. It is a mortal desolation to us poor people of Illinois to see ourselves deprived of so many brave men. I conclude, my dear brother, assuring you that nobody has more of attachment and good will.

Your dear brother,

TOUSSIN LOIZEL.”

“At Ste. Anne, the 13th of April, 1736.

“In regard to the persons who have perished in this unhappy war, there are Messrs. De St.-Ange, the son, Coulonge, Leville, the young Duclaude, Vincenne, LaGravière with M. Belcoute and another of his brothers, and the fourth with a broken shoulder. M. de Tonty, D'Esgly and the elder Lalonde and Antoine Carrière, Louis Langlois, M. Dutilly, the son. The others are French or from Quebec, whom we do not know.”

1746—On the 24th of January, 1656, the vestry-board of the parish of Notre Dame de Quebec conceded to Francois Bissot, Sieur de la Rivière, a pew of six feet in length by three and one-half feet in depth in the

said church, to possess for himself and his heirs in perpetuity, in consideration of one hundred livres once paid, and the ordinary dues of said parish at each replacing. Originally this pew was below the railing and seats of the choristers; in 1729 it was the second in the middle row on the left-hand side of the altar.

At the death of Bissot, in 1678, his son-in-law, Louis Jolliet, on account of his wife, Claire Françoise Bissot, and also, it is alleged, on account of services rendered as organist of the parish of Quebec, had the possession of this pew until his decease, in 1700 and thereafter his wife Claire, Bissot, also to her decease in 1710.

Then succeeded to the wife of Jolliet, as occupant of the pew of Bissot, her daughter Claire Jolliet, who had married Joseph de Fleury, Sieur de la Gorgendiére, Seigneur D'Eschambault. The 13th of March, 1720, the vestry-board of Quebec accorded regularly the possession of the pew of Bissot to Sieur de la Gorgendiére, aforesaid.

On the 8th of April, 1729, François Bissot, the son, citizen of Quebec, by the agency of Jacques Delafontaine Balcour, his son-in-law, brought action against the vestry-board of Quebec to compel it to put him in possession of the pew of his father, occupied by the Sieur de la Gorgendiére, offering to pay all the expense of the replacement.

The vestry-board answered that it was not able to avoid conceding the pew in question to Sieur La Gorgendiére, as having married Claire Jolliet, grand-daughter of Bissot, there being then present no other persons claiming as heirs of the late Sieur Bissot.

François Bissot, who never took the title "De Vincennes" in this procedure, replied that if he had not previously claimed the possession of his father's pew, it was because he came to this city only once a year, and that he had not been called to the hearing of the vestry-board because he would have opposed it; but that it had never taken away from him the right which accrued to him by the title of concession to the said deceased Sieur Bissot, his father. The vestry-board contested this action before the Provost, and on May 3 following judgment was rendered in favor of François Bissot, who possessed it until his death; likewise his wife also until her death in 1745.

In 1746 still another contest arose concerning the possession of this pew. Nicolas Boisseau, Secretary Judge of the King, and Chief Clerk of the Council, in his capacity of husband of Louise Bissot, and of representative of Marguerite Forestier, widow of Jean Bissot de Vincennes, his mother-in-law, claimed possession of the said pew against Jacques de la Fontaine, counsellor, who had married Charlotte Bissot, daughter and heiress of François Bissot, the son, who had continued to possess this pew since the death of his mother-in-law.

The heirs of François Bissot represented, among other things, that Sieur François Bissot, the son, was put in possession of the pew of his father only in 1729, that is to say after the death of his elder brother, the Sieur de Vincennes; and that if there was any right of primogeniture in this matter, it did not belong to the Sieur de Vincennes, who had never taken possession; moreover the wife of Sieur Boisseau well knew that the

ancestors who would have been able to contest this were dead, and that she ought not to ignore that she had a brother married with all the ceremonies of the church to an Illinois or Miami woman, who had left male children to whom the right of primogeniture belonged in preference to her.

The brief of Boisseau representing the widow Bissot de Vincennes is not present in the package of papers which has come to our hands; but one can see, from the reply of the adverse party, that the chief argument of his brief was the right which Jean-Baptiste Bissot de Vincennes had, as eldest son, to succeed to his father in the possession of the pew. One sees that, in response to the brief of Delafontaine, Boisseau declares: "That it is unquestionable that the late Sieur de Vincennes, the son, of whom the said Delafontaine speaks in his writing, did not leave any male heir." It was finally ordered that the widow of the late Sieur de Vincennes, as well as the Sieurs Delafontaine and Boisseau, in their names, possess in common, each one-third of the pew in question; and that after the death of the widow Vincennes, Boisseau and Delafontaine both possess in equal parts. On the occasion of this procedure, I note that the wife of the late Jean Bissot de Vincennes signed her name as follows: "Marguerite Forrestier, veuve Vencene."

From all this it follows that Jean Baptiste Bissot de Vincennes, who gave his name to the capital of Indiana, had for godfather the celebrated Intenant Talon; that in 1687 he was about to depart to France; and that finally, in 1694, he signed, "Bissot Vensenne."

It appears also clearly established that Jean Bissot de Vincennes was dead in 1729, and in consequence it was his son who was burned by the Chickasaws in 1736; that this son was married to an Indian woman, that he had no male child, and that he was dead in 1746 at the time of the last contest for the pew of his ancestor.

The letter of Toussaint Loizel appears to contradict the writers who have spoken of this famous battle with the Chickasaws in 1736, when they claim that it occurred in May, whereas it could not have taken place after the 14th of April, the date on which Loizel wrote, who furnished a description with such detail that it cannot be mistaken.

PHILEAS GAGNAN.

After receiving these documents, I suggested to Mr. Doughty that possibly some light might be thrown on the subject by the record of the passage of the fief to the Roy family; and he kindly sent me, under date of February 14, 1916, the following copy of the record:

Herewith is a copy of the Foy et Homage for the Seigniory of Vincennes, which Mr. Dunn mentions in his letter. As to the Register of the Post of Vincennes, it contains all the marriages, births and burials that were made between the years 1749-1786.

Archives Publiques, Serie M, Actes De Foy et Hommage, Vol. 4, p. 348.

**"LE SIEUR JOSEPH ROY SEIGNEUR ET PROPRIETAIRE DE LA
SEIGNEURIE DE VINCENNES"**

"En procédant à la confection du papier terrier du Domaine du Roy en la province de Quebec est comparu au chateau St. Louis de Quebec par devant nous Frederic Haldimand capitaine général et gouverneur en chef de la province de Quebec et territoires en dépendans en Amérique, Vice amiral et garde du grand sceau d'icelle, général et commandant en chef des troupes de Sa Majesté en la dite province et frontières &.&&. le sieur Joseph Roy seigneur et propriétaire du fief et seigneurie de Vincennes sis et situé dans le district de Quebec, lequel comparant nous a dit qu'il vient par devant nous pour rendre et porter au chateau St. Louis de Quebec la foy et hommage lige qu'il est tenu de rendre et porter à Sa Très Excellente Majesté Georges Trois à cause du dit fief et seigneurie ci après expliqué et nous a réprésenté pour titres de sa propriété; Primo, une copie autentique d'une concession donnée et accordée par M. Talon ci-devant intendant en la Nouvelle France le trois noverembre 1672, au sieur Bissot de soixante dix arpens de terre de front sur une lieue de profondeur à prendre sur le fleuve St. Laurent depuis les terres apartenantes au sieur de la Citière jusqu'aux terres non concédées pour par lui ses hoirs et ayans cause jouir de la dite terre en fief et seignearie sans justice a la charge de la foy et hommage à porter au chateau St. Louis de Quebec duquel il relevera aux droits et redevances accoutumés suivant la coutume, de tenir ou faire tenir feu et lieu sur la dite seigneurie, de conserver et faire conserver les bois de chène qui se trouveront propres à la construction des vaisseaux, de donner avis au Roy des mines, minières ou minéraux si aucun se trouvent dans l'étendue du dit fief et de laisser les chemins et passages nécessaires; Secundo, sentence d'adjudication par décret rendu en la prévoté de Quebec le dix neuf aoust 1749, au sieur Joseph Roy père du dit comparant du dit fief et seigneurie de Vincennes et dépendances pour et moyennant le prix et somme de cinq mille six cents livres, au bas de laquelle sentence est la quittance de Monsieur Maitre François Etienne Cugnet Directeur du Domaine du Roy au dit sieur Joseph Roy de la somme de huit cent quarante livres pour droit de quint le quart déduit du prix principal de la dite adjudication, en date du vingt-un aoust 1749; Tertio, un acte passé devant Panet et son confrère notaires à Quebec le vingt-cinq mars 1759, portant partage entre Jean Copron et Marie Roy son épouse tant au dit nom que comme tuteur des enfans mineurs de feu Pierre Reval et Charlotte Roy son épouse, le comparant et Marie Gabriel Sarrault son épouse, et Charles Lecours et Marguerit Roy son épouse de la succession de feu sieur Joseph Roy et de Marie Jeanne Couture, par lequel il apert que les dits Corpron et Lecours ont cédé au dit comparant et son épouse le dit fief et seigneurie de Vincennes en entier pour et moyennant une rente viagère de cinq cent vingt cinq livres à la veuve de feu Joseph Roy, leur père et beau-père et en outre la somme de trois mille livres de Soulte et retour; qui sont tous les titres que le dit comparant a dit avoir à nous représenter nous suppliant qu'il nous plaise le recevoir à la foy et hommage lige qu'il est tenu de rendre du dit fief et seigneurie de Vincennes relevant

en plein fief de Sa Majesté, et à l'instant s'étant mis en devoir de Vassal, tête nue, épée et éperons et un genouil en terre aurait dit à haute et intelligible voix qu'il rendait et portait nos mains la foy hommage qu'il est tenu de rendre et porter au Roy au chateau St. Louis de Quebec à cause du dit fief et seigneurie, à laquelle foy et hommage nous l'avons reçu et recevons par ces présentes sauf les droits du Roy en autre chose et de l'autrui en toutes, et le dit comparant a fait et souscrit entre nos mains le serment de bien et fidèlement servir Sa Majesté et de nous avertir et nos successeurs s'il apprend qu'il se fasse quelque chose contre son service, et s'est obligé de fournir son aveu et dénombrement dans le temps prescrit par les lois coutumes et usages de cette province; Dont et du tout il nous a requis acte que nous lui avons accordé et a signé avec nous.

"FRED HALDIMAND.

"J. ROY,

"J. MONK, Attorney general.

"Par ordre de Son Excellence, F. J. CUGNET, G. P. T."

—*Archives Publique, Serie M. Actes de Foy et Hommage, Vol. IV, p. 348.*

Translation of Above

SIEUR JOSEPH ROY, SEIGNEUR AND PROPRIETOR OF THE SEIGNORY OF
VINCENNES

In proceeding for the completion of the court-roll record of the estate of Roy in the Province of Quebec, has appeared at the Castle of St. Louis of Quebec before us, Frederic Haldimand, captain-general and governor-in-chief of the Province of Quebec and territories and dependencies in America, vice-admiral and keeper of the great seal of the same, general and commandant-in-chief of the troops of His Majesty in the said province and frontiers, etc, Sieur Joseph Roy, seigneur and proprietor of the fief and seignory of Vincennes, situate in the district of Quebec, which applicant has said to us that he comes before us to render and bring to the Castle of St. Louis of Quebec the liege fealty and homage which he is held to render and bring to his Very Excellent Majesty George III on account of said fief and seignory as hereunder set forth and has shewn us as titles of his ownership: First, an authentic copy of a concession given and accorded by M. Talon, former Intendant in New France, November 3, 1672, to Sieur Bissot of seventy arpents of land front by a league in depth to be taken on the River St. Lawrence from the lands belonging to Sieur de la Citière to the lands not conceded, for him, his heirs and assigns to enjoy the said land in fief and seignory, irrevocably, charged with rendering faith and homage at the Castle of St. Louis of Quebec, by which he will discharge the accustomed dues and rents according to custom, to keep or cause to be kept domicile and residence on the said seignory, to conserve or cause to be conserved the oak trees suitable for the construction of vessels; to inform the King of any mines, minerals or ores, if any are found within the said fief, and to permit all necessary roads and ways. Second, writ of adjudication by decree given in the office of the Provost

of Quebec, August 19, 1749, to Sieur Joseph Roy, the father of said applicant, of said fief and seignory of Vincennes and dependencies, on paying the sum of 5,600 livres, on the back of which writ is the receipt of M. Master Francois Etienne Cugnet, Director of the Domains of the King, to the said Sieur Joseph Roy, for the sums of 840 livres for the right to a fifth part, one fourth being deducted from the principal of the said adjudication, dated August 21, 1749. Third, a deed passed before Panet and his associate notaries at Quebec March 25, 1759, making partition between Jean Corpron and Marie Roy, his wife, both in said name and as guardian of the minor children of the late Pierre Reval and Charlotte Roy, his wife, the plaintiff and Marie Gabriel Sarrault, his wife and Charles Lecours and Marguerite Roy, his wife, of the estate of the late Joseph Roy and Marie Jeanne Couture; by which it appears that the said Corpron and Lecours have ceded to the said plaintiff and his wife the said fief and seignory of Vincennes in entirety for the compensation of a life-rent of 525 livres to the widow of the late Joseph Roy, their father and father-in-law, and in addition the sum of 3,000 livres, balance in partition: Which are all the titles the said plaintiff has stated he had to present to us, asking that it may please us to receive the fealty and liege homage which he is bound to render for the said fief and seignory of Vincennes, renewing in full fief of His Majesty; and at the time, putting himself in the attitude of a vassal, with uncovered head, without sword or spurs, and with one knee on the ground he declared in a loud and intelligible voice that he rendered and brought to our hands the fealty and homage which he is bound to render and bring to the King at the Castle of St. Louis of Quebec, on account of said fief and seignory; the which fealty and homage we have received, and do receive by these presents, saving the rights of the King in one thing and another in all respects; and the said plaintiff has made and subscribed the oath at our hands to well and faithfully serve His Majesty, and to inform us and our successors if he apprehends that anything works against his service, and he is obliged to furnish his acknowledgement and enumeration in the time prescribed by the laws and customs and usages of this province. Of which and of all he has prayed of us a deed, which we have accorded, and he has signed with us.

FRED HALDIMAND.

J. ROY,

J. MONK, Attorney general.

By order of His Excellency,

F. J. CUGNET, G. P. T.

While these documents do not solve the problem, they eliminate Jean-Baptiste Bissot, who evidently died at Fort Wayne in 1719. They also make more clear the circumstances accompanying the founding of Post Vincennes, and slightly advance the date of that occurrence by the statement in 1730 that Sieur de Vincennes has led the Piankeshaws into the jurisdiction of Louisiana. The objections of the Governor of Canada explain why the establishment of

the post was delayed, after the orders for it in 1726. But probably the greatest interest will be found in the revelation by these documents of the extent to which the feudal system was in force in Canada, and the serious issues involved in the title to a pew in the cathedral at Quebec.